l: Karsten--246-247
521

(1916-18) 1935
(1928-29)

Jivaro

"The most curious thing in this greeting ceremony, however, is the tone in which the men speak and the way in which the whole conversation is carried on. It is not the ordinary conversational tone; the Indian who is speaking for the moment shouts loudly, and the words follow [247] each other so quickly that to a person who is not well acquainted with the Jibaro language it is extremely difficult to understand what they are saying. During the conversation the host and the guest regard each other with stern looks just as if they were angry or excited, while they speak they hold the hand to the mouth, and after every fourth or fifth word they spit on the ground, sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left. A listener unacquainted with the customs of the Indians might believe that two madmen are conversing. It may be more to the point however to liken them to two lions, doing their best to arouse mutual respect. The guests drink manioc-beer the whole time they are conversing, it being offered them by two or three women who move continually between the men's ante-room and the 'kitchen' with their piningas."

1: Karsten--248-249 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 576, 609, 521 (1928-29)

"Ceremonial greetings also take place when two parties of Jibaro Indians suddenly meet on the trail in the virgin forest, even when they are well known to each other. On the other hand, if the Indians are totally unknown to one another the greeting ceremony assumes the form called Enéma. The Enéma is properly a war dance and is especially a preparation for war, so this peculiar ceremony will be described in detail in connection with the wars of the Indians. The Enéma greeting ceremony differs from the war dance Enéma especially as regards the words uttered, though in the former case, too, there is always a menace behind the words and movements. For each party there is the possibility that the other one is travelling with hostile intentions and the very aim of the 'greeting' is to find out whether this is so. Assuming as haughty and arrogant an attitude as possible and facing each other with fierce looks, the Indians in turn and with a thundering voice call out certain questions to one another, accompanying these with threatening movements of the lances. The conversation is generally carried out much in the following manner:

Amuesha ya?, 'Who are you?'
Wétei (Andicheiti), 'I am (my name is) Andiche'.
Amínyu wikáhei, 'I am coming to see you',
Chamurstai--chamursti, (movements with the lance).
Waritkunái --waritkuni, etc. (movements with the lance).

Úruka irúndra wikéima, 'Why do you go united (in a party)?'
Mésechasi, 'Is it in order to make war?'
Tsa, tsa, méseta wikáchahei, 'No, no, we are not going for war',
Pingichichâma wikáhei, 'We are coming to speak nicely (with you)',
Wari sumáktinyu, 'To buy something',
Mésetaka nakítahei, 'We do not like to make war',
Wáriki, wáriki, wikáhei, 'We go only for things (to barter)';
Wínya eíntsu ístinyu, 'To see our own people';
Seásа itáhei, 'We bring arrow-poison (to sell)';
Nanki itáhei, 'We bring lances (to sell)', etc.
Seásа, akáru sumáktinyu, 'to buy arrow-poison, guns', etc.
Maketi, 'It is all right'. [249]

The conversation having gone on in this way for a while and the peaceful intentions of the strangers having been manifested, the Indians can enter the house and sit down to have manioc-beer, or, if they met in the forest, both parties continue their march."

2: Stirling--97-98 (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 574, 521, 195

"The remainder of the night our men slept in this same section of the house and during most of the following day they retained their places along the wall of the Jivaría in comparative quiet. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, or 24 hours after our arrival, Caneros pulled his seat in front of Ambusha and began a vigorous ceremonial conversation, very loud, and delivered in a sort of syncopated rhythm, beating time with his feet and gesturing with his arms, while Ambusha replied in similar vein, each of them punctuating the talk with ejaculations of 'Casa', 'Casa', (So that's it!), 'Ho', 'Ha', (Good! Fine!), 'Tsa', 'Tsa', 'Tsa', (No, no, no!), 'Tcah', 'Tcah', (I don't know). The substance of the conversation concerned the events that had happened on the trip and other events of interest that had taken place since the speakers had last met.

After about half an hour Caneros moved his seat in front of Utita and went through the same performance, then with Tuki, and finally with Tsamagashi. Meanwhile, the remainder of the men sat quietly by the walls, apparently indifferent to what was being said. During [98] these curious conversations, the fist is closed lightly and the palm of the hand turned toward the face. While talking, the knuckles are placed against the mouth. As they talk they spit vigorously and frequently between the fingers. The conversation is also punctuated with tongue clicks and smacking of the lips. This continued until evening, various other pairs now teaming off in the same manner so that the noise of talking was much greater than on the previous day."

12: Rivet--599-600 (no date) 1907 Jívaro
116, 512, 521, 201

The Indian is an early riser: at 3 o'clock in the morning he wakes up, and if he is[600] head of a family, his first concern is to repeat in a loud and spiritual voice the history of the tribe, the wars that it has carried on with the neighboring peoples, and the names of the relatives killed in these fights. He mixes into his account praise for his friends and himself and insults for his enemies, advice to the children so that they may some day become worthy of their father, that is to say that they be adroit hunters, that they raise good dogs, that they be hardy in expeditions and unrelenting in vengeance. (1) During this discourse, the Jíbaro keeps the closed left fist placed level with the lower lip against the chin (fig. 20). This discourse finished, the women give everyone the morning infusion of guayusa.

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1. Vacas Galindo. Nankijukima, op. cit., page 75.

The Jívaro enters the house saying, "Uinahe" ("I have come"), to which the host answers simply, "Uiñita" ("Come"). Then he sits down on a bench near the door without adding a word. This coldness on the part of the visitor and indifference on the part of the host are the rule. It is not until the latter, properly dressed, is seated opposite the new arrival and has asked him why he has come and where he is going and where he has come from, that the conversation commences; a strange colloquy of extraordinary animation, vivacity and volubility; each one in his turn taking the floor and hurriedly pouring out what he has to say in a loud and sonorous voice. "All the body goes into action, hands and feet moving, the chest heaving, eyes flashing fire, forehead burning, and the hair violently thrown back from the head falling on naked shoulders." (1) One would think that a violent dispute had broken out between the two friends, but they are simply talking; while one speaks, the other approves, confirms, gets excited, and shows by his various comments [613] the interest he takes in the speaker's recital. At the end of half an hour of this tiring conversation that foreigners, even those most used to the Jívaro language, cannot follow or understand, the tone becomes more natural and more calm, and the Indian does not disdain the joking that refreshes and brings a smile to the lips of these wild savages. This is the moment when each woman offers to the visitor a pininga of chicha. If the host has only one wife, she must offer three bowls of drink.

1. Vacas Galindo. Nankijukima, op. cit., page 8.

It has been noted that the Jívaro always talks thus in groups of two, and that the chief of the tribe, for example, does not communicate his instructions in a collective way but speaks individually to each member of the tribe (2), when he wants to assemble them in case of war or for any expedition, hunting or fishing, or for a feast. In short, the Jívaro captains use nothing but dialogue and never harangue their soldiers.

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2. Vacas Galindo. Nankijukima, op. cit., page 84.

13: Rivet--242-243 (no date) 1908 Jívaro
195, 521

Each morning, at three o'clock, a curious dialogue which last three long hours is carried on between the director of the [KS: tobacco] ceremonies and his host. The latter expounds all his grievances at length: "I have no hogs, my children are hungry, I am very poor, what shall I do?" to which the old man answers: "Perform the ceremony well and you will see: so and so was more miserable than you, and after he celebrated the tobacco feast, you see, he has so many cultivated fields, [243] so many hogs and other riches (here an interminable list)"

"Very curious are the ceremonial conversations (or perhaps, more correctly, monologues) which these Indians exchange, as a preliminary to any natural talk, whenever and wherever they meet. The speaker never looks at the individual addressed but allows his eyes to wander all around with an odd air of nonchalance; while the other accents the oration, as it were, by the constant utterance of deep-throated grunts or short, sharp, rapidly repeated ejaculations, translatable, according to one authority, (26) by the Spanish expressions sí, no, bueno, como no, así es. And every now and then the hearer expectorates in a manner suggestive of contempt, disgust, or defiance, or indulges in that peculiar clicking of the tongue habitual, it would seem, to all Amazonian tribes, whatever the action may denote. (27) The voice in these effusions is always pitched very low, so that

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"26. The Rev. Father Enrique Vacas Galindo, O.P., in his work 'Nankijukima,' published at Ambato, Ecuador, in 1895. The title is the name of a Jíbaro chief of whom the author writes.

27. Cf. Simson, op. cit., p. 94; Whiffen, op. cit., p. 249."

it acquires a ventral timbre, and the hand, with fingers bent in toward the palm, is frequently held in front of the mouth, presumably for acoustic effect. As the harangue proceeds it gathers in strength and vehemence of delivery like the crescendo of a swiftly oncoming storm, while apt emotional gestures and pose lend to the performance a fitting dramatic touch. Then the other holds forth in like manner, and, if several be present, each one has his turn. I listened to many of these extraordinary and really impressive declamations, but never succeeded in learning anything as to their subject or import....

A considerable time was thus consumed at the house which we were now visiting. The drinking of chicha followed, and after a decent interval, during which I distributed some presents of gunpowder and shot, small mirrors, beads, and other trifles, we took our departure."

20: Dyott--164-166 (no date) 1926 Jivaro-1
116, 195, 521

".... Out of the thicket appeared the figure of a strange Indian.....

The stranger halted, eyed us thoughtfully, and then shouted out 'Oi-a.' Kuashu replied, 'Ah,' receiving an equally intelligent grunt of 'Um,' in reply.

If you should suddenly come face to face with a stranger, your natural impulse would be to call out to him and then walk over to where he stood, but these are not the tactics [165] of the Indian. 'Is this man friend or foe?' he asks himself, and if the unknown suddenly veers round and hurries towards him, the obvious answer is: 'He is an enemy, coming to attack.' If, on the other hand, he turns away, he is an enemy trying to escape; but suppose he goes on about his business, or else you both stop and talk, you have time to show your colours and announce your friendly intentions.

Normal Indian conversation is slow and halting, but it can go off like machine-gun fire at times. Should a phrase not come readily, there is no pause. Both parties continue to grunt at each other, holding one hand in front of the mouth all the time and probably expectorating between the fingers with a precision that denotes much practice.

When Kuashu hailed this stranger, we all stood stock still, the boys with the deer slung on a pole, the ends of which rested on their shoulders, Johnston and myself behind them. The conversation which followed, if translated freely into English, would run somewhat as follows. Kuashu began.

'So you are here?'--'Yes, I am here.'--'What are you here for?'--'What am I here

for?'--'Yes, what are you here for?'--'I am wandering about.'--'You are, are you?' --'Yes, I am.'--'Why do you wander about?'--'I am wandering about for a little time.' --'For a little time you are wandering?'--'Yes, for a little I wander about visiting friends.'--'Then you are visiting friends?'--'Yes, for a few days I visit.'--'Only for a few days, you say?'--'Um, only a few days.'--'I am surprised.'--'You are, are you?' --'I am surprised that you wander about for a little visiting friends.'--'Um.'--'When did you come?'--'Only yesterday I came.'--'Yesterday?'--'Um.'--'For a few days only?'--'That is what I said.'--'You came yesterday to wander about for a little to visit some friends?' [166] --'Um.'--'Ah--So you understand, do you?'--'Um'--'Ah'--'Um.'

After this fragment of news had been thoroughly pulled to pieces and passed back and forth between the two until its significance had been fully grasped, another piece of intelligence was torn to shreds in the similar manner. The grunts, representing assent or approbation and other guttural noises, that were indulged in, especially when the conversation flagged, were decidedly curious."

20: Dyoti--166
116, 195, 521, 828

(no date) 1926

Jivaro

"Direct questions and answers are not understood by the Jivaros. To ask a deliberate question does not seem to conform to his idea of propriety. Every subject has to be approached by a round-about route and with infinite repetition. This is probably due to the inherent difficulty primitive man has in expressing shades of thought and his round-about course is equivalent to our guarded phraseology noticeable amongst politicians when delicate matters are being discussed. To an Indian, the most trivial incident is of as much importance as it would be to a child, so everything has to be taken seriously. It is also well not to look too intently at the person you are talking to. You may be accused of casting a spell on him if you do. A man looking in can see the world: hence the world looking in can see the man. Such is their line of reasoning, and consequent aversion from the vulgar stare of some white men."

20: Dyott-166-167 (no date) 1926 Jivaro
116, 151, 521

"Our conversation with the stranger disclosed the fact that he was called Napi, and that he was on speaking terms with Kuashu's family. He lived several days to the south on the Paute river, and had taken an opportunity of travelling with two other men who were on their way to visit friends living not far off. Before all this information had been divulged, Napi had joined our group, and we were all making tracks for home.

On the way back, we climbed up a steep, muddy bank. [167] Half-way up the slippery slope, Kuashu stopped, his eyes on the ground, examining some footsteps which had been plainly impressed in the clay-like soil. They were those of Napi's travelling companions.

'Why are your friends carrying such heavy loads?' he asked. 'And the young woman with you, is she your wife?' Napi shook his head.

'No, the woman belongs to one of the other men.' And he went on to explain that his companions had brought over two loads of salt which they had promised their friends some months back.

Kuashu seemed to be a past-master at interpreting human foot-prints. To him they were like an open book. He explained in reply to our inquiries that the habit women had of carrying bundles from early childhood caused their feet to turn in, the angle generally becoming more pronounced the older the woman became. Men always turned their feet outwards and the heel is much larger in proportion. Kuashu was quick to note that the toes of the two men were dug deeply into the soft ground, indicating that they were carrying heavy loads and were obliged to get a good foothold at every step."

20: Dyott--168-169
116, 264, 521

(no date) 1926

Jivaro

"The noon-day meal went off very well. There was an abundance of food and plenty of nija-manchi to drink. [169] From start to finish there was not a lull in the conversation. It went on incessantly, everyone chattering away at once. The story of how the deer had been killed was repeated at least ten times, and on each occasion Kuashu would get up to show by action just what took place. The assembly roared with laughter, the women being just as interested in the event as anyone else, and Chingasso was regarded with envy for having been a witness to such exciting scenes."

25: Vigna-45-46 (no date) 1945 Jivaro
116, 521, 574

The social obligations of the Jívaros are curious. On visits of courtesy or friendship, the visitor, even though he may be the father of the owner of the house, waits in silence near the door, until his host finishes his tasks, his conversation with another, his meal or his toilet. When the host deems it opportune, he addresses the visitor. The latter, on the alert and with his hand near his mouth, spitting on the floor at intervals, does not give greetings; he only tells him that he has come. And he repeats each expression two, three and even four times. The host accompanies with monosyllables of approbation, or by repeating the last word. After the speech, the host repeats the same speech with some comments; thus, the [46] conversation sometimes lasts whole hours. When there are many visitors, while one speaks, the others keep silent and remain in a file along the wall of the house, awaiting their turn for conversation with the host. One can imagine the thankless task which is imposed upon the latter when he is visited by many friends. Many times they become hoarse and aphonic from so much talking. Only at the end of the conversation does the master of the house order one of his women to serve chicha to the visitor; the cups of chicha are offered again and again until the guest says: enough. It is a dangerous thing to refuse chicha.

25: Vigna--46 (no date) 1945 Jivaro
116, 521

The "official" conversation between two Jíbaros who for the first time are talking or communicating things of transcendency, is exceedingly picturesque and typical. In these conversations, the pantomime, the tone of voice, the words and monosyllables that they use, have a special importance and finality. It is not easy to imitate these conversations and only the men can do it with perfection. If they do not wish to be understood in the solemn conversations, the words that they use will have special inflections and apocopes. The Jíbaro women never converse with the ceremonial of the men, but in a familiar form.